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# *Preface*

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*This manual was developed as a quick reference guide to the more common activities associated with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).*

*The purpose of this manual is to provide new members of the County Board of Supervisors, or other public officials, with a better understanding of the Department. The topics cover the activities most commonly performed by the residency and district offices, and will assist in answering questions generated from constituents.*

*In all cases, the information is a broad overview of policy or guidelines. Each residency and district office has unique characteristics which require that they perform some functions beyond what is stated in this manual. For more detailed information, always contact the local residency or district office of VDOT.*

*We hope that this manual is a useful and productive tool in understanding and working with VDOT.*

*Originally Prepared By: V. D. O. T.'s Assistant Resident Engineers Committee, Lin Heath, Jesse Aldhizer; Reviewed and Revised by the Assistant Resident Engineers Committee - 1999.*

# *Abandonment of Roads*

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There are two circumstances for abandoning a road that is a part of the secondary system of state highways.

1. The Board of Supervisors must find either that:
  - (a) "no public necessity exists for the continuance of the secondary road as a public road" (i.e., lack of public use), or
  - (b) "the safety and welfare of the public would be served best by abandoning the section of road."
2. A new road "which serves the same citizens as the old road" must be already constructed to Department standards and accepted into the secondary system. In practice, the acceptance of the new road and the abandonment of the old road may be acted upon the same day, but only in that sequence.

The first circumstance requires the Board of Supervisors to announce its intent to abandon a road, including providing formal notice to the Commissioner, and a willingness to hold a public hearing.

Following a public hearing, assuming one is requested and properly held, the Board of Supervisors acts to either dismiss the abandonment or to abandon the road within a prescribed time frame.

For roads that have only a prescriptive easement for right of way, a lawful abandonment, under either of the above circumstances, normally extinguishes the prescriptive easement and the road ceases to be a public road.

For roads that have right of way dedicated to public use, abandonment has the effect of closing the road to the public, but interests in the real property dedicated for right of way may only be transferred by a separate conveyance; right of way dedicated to a county government may be conveyed by the county; right of way dedicated to the Commonwealth may be conveyed only by the Department. The conveyance of right of way may follow an abandonment, but may not precede an abandonment.

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## *Additions to the Secondary*

# *System of State Highways*

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Prior to 1932, there was no "secondary system of state highways." Local public roads existed under the jurisdiction of the local governing body, the Board of Supervisors in each county. In 1932, the Byrd Act gave the counties the opportunity to transfer jurisdiction over their local public road system to the Commonwealth under the review of the Virginia Department of Transportation. Currently, only Arlington and Henrico Counties manage their own system of local roads.

Within the counties, certain public roads exist that are not a part of the secondary system of state highways until their addition is petitioned by the Board of Supervisors and they are formally accepted by the Commissioner.

Additions to the secondary system of state highways generally result from:

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- ◆ **Development** - These streets are usually the result of a subdivision of land and must meet prerequisites established by the "Subdivision Street Requirements", which constitutes a regulation of the Commonwealth. The addition of streets as a result of development are discussed in the "Subdivision Street Requirements" manual.

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- ◆ Streets that result from development under the Recreational Access, Industrial Access, and Airport Access programs are subject to additional prerequisites that are set forth in other documents specific to the individual access program. Procedures for the addition of such streets vary from those outlined for subdivision streets only in that a formal resolution from the local governing body typically precedes construction and requests the addition of the street upon completion.

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- ◆ **Rural Additions** - Streets added under this category of additions exist as a result of past development, which either could not be or were not proposed to be accepted as a part of the secondary system of state highways. In many cases, such streets were constructed for reasons other than development and did not qualify for acceptance by the state. However, as a result of increased public service, the streets meet prerequisites for addition to the secondary system of state highways and improvement at public expense. This is based on available funding.

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- ◆ **School Roads** - More specifically, roads that lead from state highways, either primary or secondary, to public schools in the counties of the Commonwealth to which school buses are

operated, and which are on school property, are eligible for addition to the secondary system of state highways.

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- ◆ **Streets in Towns (Population under 3,500)** - Additions of "town" streets to the secondary system of state highways. In most towns having a population under 3,500 qualifying streets may be added to the secondary system of state highways. Limitations that may restrict annual mileage additions to not more than 1/4 mile and construction standards depend upon the individual town's operating authority.
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- ◆ Miscellaneous additions to the secondary system of state highways (e.g., those that occur as a result of road relocation projects) are frequently accompanied by acts of discontinuance and abandonment.
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*Funds for additions are for construction and engineering activities. All expenditures for right of ways, removal of fixed objects, and utility relocations must be borne by other parties.*

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## *Airport Access Funding*

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The airport access road program is used to provide access roads to licensed public use airports. The Commonwealth Transportation Board administers the program in cooperation with the Department of Aviation. Funding for airport access projects is allocated from the Industrial, Airport and Rail Access Fund.

Prior to the allocation, the governing body of the county, city, or town must, by resolution, request the access funds. Airport access funding may not be used for the acquisition of rights of way or adjustments of utilities, and the governing body must state in its resolution that these items will be provided at no cost to the program. A maximum allocation of \$450,000 (\$300,000), unmatched and up to \$150,000 matched dollar for dollar may be approved to serve any one airport.

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## *Discontinuance*

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Discontinuance is an act reserved for the Commonwealth Transportation Board. It is the result of a determination that the road no longer serves a public service warranting its maintenance at public expenses. By discontinuance the Department relieves itself of maintenance responsibility.

The effect of discontinuance upon a road is not to eliminate it as a public road or to render it unavailable for public use.

The local governing body of any county or the town council (for towns with a population less than 3,500) may request that VDOT discontinue a section of roadway as part of the secondary system of State highways. This request may either be a petition or resolution from the local governing body. Then VDOT will issue a public notice of intent to discontinue maintenance and advise all adjacent property owners. A public hearing may be conducted if requested by the local governing body or property owner. Afterwards, the Resident Engineer prepares a discontinuance assembly with a recommendation and submits it to Secondary Roads Division and the Commonwealth Transportation Board for approval.

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## *Donated Right of Way*

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Donated right of way is a means of quickly obtaining right of way for constructing those roads listed on the approved Secondary Roads Six-Year Construction Plan. These roads usually do not have any major environmental, historical, or citizen opposition associated with them. If everyone on the road is agreeable with the proposed construction and right of way can be negotiated through donation, the time and cost of preliminary engineering can be reduced.

Roads on which donated right of way is obtained can be constructed at a much lower cost. The costs associated with design, title search, appraisal, soils investigation, attorneys' fees and right of way agents are virtually eliminated.

When a road is included in the Six-Year Secondary Roads Improvement Plan and comes within approximately two years of construction, typically, the residency sends letters to all property owners adjacent to the road advising them that we are beginning our right of way process. VDOT personnel will then contact the affected property owners, explain the work necessary to improve the road, and negotiate for donated right of way.

Although it is called donated right of way, the property owner does have the right to receive just compensation - items such as fences can be replaced with new fence or receive pay for the loss of fence. Shrubs and trees may be replaced or the owner may be paid for the loss.

There are several standard deeds that may be used depending on the requirements of the roadway and the property. These deeds are signed by all property owners before a notary public and are recorded in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office of the affected county.

By using donated right of way procedures, roads may be constructed more quickly and at a cost significantly less than by using the full design and right of way purchase processes.

Board of Supervisors members can assist in the acquisition of donated rights of way by informing the interested parties of this process and encouraging their cooperation with our representatives.

The administrating agency shall be responsible for the appropriate environmental review processes.

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## *Industrial Access Program*

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The industrial access road program is administered by the Commonwealth Transportation Board, which allocates funds for eligible projects from the Industrial, Airport and Rail Access Fund. The purpose of the program is to finance the construction or improvement of roads, with the exception of primaries, new or expanding industrial sites. These roads will provide access from the nearest adequate publicly maintained road to the property line of the industrial site. Adequate access may require construction of a new roadway or improvement of an existing road. A new roadway should provide economical access to the qualifying industrial site, and not primarily facilitate adjacent land development. Qualifying industries



are determined by the Commonwealth Transportation Board in consultation with the Virginia Department of Business Assistance.

Where an existing road constitutes a portion of the secondary (not primary) system of state highways or is part of the road system of the locality in which it is located, industrial access funds may be used to upgrade the existing road only to the extent required to meet the needs of traffic generated by the new or expanding industrial facility.

An initial request must be made to the local governing body by an industry desiring financial assistance. A letter of request to the appropriate local governing body must include the following:

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- A. Intent to build or expand on a designated site
  - B. Description and location of the site
  - C. Target date for building construction
  - D. Target date for beginning plant operation
  - E. Capital investment planned on the site, itemized
  - F. Product or products to be manufactured
  - G. The number of new jobs to be created
  - H. Access road improvements requested
  - I. Estimates of the numbers of additional employee vehicles and truck traffic which will use the access road on an average business day
- 

The industry should submit a copy of this letter to the Resident Engineer, along with a preliminary road plan showing the entire parcel of land and the locations of: the building, major site features, the proposed entrance, the proposed access road, and existing public roads in the vicinity of the site. It is also advisable to forward a copy of this letter to the Virginia Department of Business Assistance.

If the local governing body supports the request, it should prepare and approve a resolution formally requesting the allocation of industrial access funds.

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If a new road is to be constructed, the resolution should state that right of way and utility adjustments will be provided at no cost to the Virginia Department of Transportation, and that the road will be added to the secondary system or to the local road as appropriate.

If the project involves improvement of an existing road, the resolution should state that right of way and utility adjustments will be provided at no cost to the Industrial, Airport and Rail Access Fund.

Industrial access projects may be either regular (where an existing industry is expanding, or a new industry is under firm contract) or bonded (where no industry is under contract to build).

Allocation for road construction is limited to 1/10th of the qualifying capital investment. The maximum allocation for any project is limited to the lesser of: the reasonable cost of an adequate road or 10 percent of the qualifying industrial investment made by the private industry. The maximum unmatched allocation within any one fiscal year is \$300,000. Where the cost exceeds \$300,000, the governing body may request up to \$150,000 in supplemental funds, which must be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Any ineligible project costs and all costs exceeding the maximum allocation must be borne by the locality.

Qualifying industrial investment includes the cost of land, the cost of site preparation and building construction, and the cost of newly purchased manufacturing or processing equipment.

Eligible capital outlay costs require documentation by copies of deeds, executed construction contracts, checks, and purchase orders, and are subject to verification by the Department of Transportation. Capital costs incurred more than six months prior to the date of the resolution of the governing body will normally be disallowed.

For bonded projects, it is necessary that the governing body guarantee that a bond or other acceptable surety will be provided to cover the cost of the road that is not justified by qualifying industrial development. Frequently in the development of an industrial park, road cost will exceed 1/10th of the amount of the qualifying capital investment. In such circumstances, it is possible to combine a regular project with a bonded project in order to provide for both present and prospective industries. The Resident Engineer will assist the locality in preparing sketches and cost estimates for the requested road improvements.

The administrating agency shall be responsible for the appropriate environmental review processes.

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## *Recreational Access Program*

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The purpose of the recreational access program is to provide adequate access to recreational areas or historic sites operated by the Commonwealth of Virginia, a local government, or authority. Both roads and bikeways are eligible for program funding.

The program is administered by VDOT under the authority of Section 33.1-223 of the Code of Virginia, with designation, recommendation and concurrence by the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Roads constructed under this program become a part of the appropriate highway system. Separate bikeways become the responsibility of the authority or agency maintaining the site, which they serve.

The road or bikeway should be located to provide the most direct cost-effective access to the site. It should end either at the entrance to the area or at internal parking lot.

The maximum eligible pavement width for a recreational access road will normally be 18 feet. Wider pavement may be included in the design but the additional cost must be funded entirely by the locality. A minimum right of way of 50 feet and any utility adjustments must be provided at no cost to the Department.

Recreational access roads and bikeways are expected to be open to the public at all times; however, they may be closed during specific hours for security purposes. No fee may be charged for the use of these roads or bikeways.

A maximum of \$400,000 may be allocated for an access road to a facility operated by a state agency. For a bikeway to a facility operated by a state agency, the maximum allocation is \$75,000. Funds are for construction cost only.

For an access road to a facility operated by a locality or authority, the maximum unmatched allocation is \$250,000. Up to an additional \$100,000 may be allocated if matched dollar-for-dollar from other than highway sources. A maximum of \$60,000 unmatched may be allocated for a bikeway to a facility operated by a locality or authority. Up to an additional \$15,000 may be requested if matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis by the locality or authority.

There is no annual limit on the number of recreational access projects per jurisdiction. The funding maximums apply only to individual projects. Also, if the appropriate criteria are met, both an access road and a bikeway may be funded separately to serve the same facility.

The administering agency shall be responsible for the appropriate environmental review processes.

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## *Revenue Sharing Program*

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The purpose of the revenue sharing program is to provide additional funding for the maintenance or improvement of the primary and secondary systems and eligible additions.

The program is administered by VDOT in cooperation with participating localities under the authority of Section 33.1-75.1 of the code of Virginia. The Commonwealth Transportation Board annually appropriates funds for this program. Application for these funds must be made by resolution of the governing body, and construction may be accomplished by VDOT, or by the locality under agreement by VDOT.

Matching funds may be used to finance work on the county's primary or secondary system. Matching funds are funds provided by the Commonwealth which are allocated to eligible items of work on a dollar-for-dollar basis by the locality's contribution. The following are examples of work eligible for these funds:

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- A. Deficits on completed construction or improvements

- B. Supplemental funding for ongoing construction or improvements
  - C. Supplemental funding for future construction or improvements listed in the adopted Six-Year Plan
  - D. Construction or improvements not included in the adopted Six-Year Plan
  - E. Construction or improvements necessary for the acceptance of specific subdivision streets otherwise eligible for acceptance into the system for maintenance
  - F. Unprogrammed maintenance whose accomplishment is consistent with the Department's operating policies
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Application for Revenue Sharing Funds is made by the county in which the road is located. The county government and Resident Engineer jointly request funds for eligible projects. This request must include what will be accomplished by the project and who will administer the project. The local Resident Engineer submits the list to the Secondary Roads Division with a copy to the District Administrator. Secondary roads notifies the county of the availability of matching funds for their use. Each county may request up to \$500,000 per year.

VDOT's Secondary Roads Division reviews all plans submitted and determines and recommends approval to the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The Commonwealth Transportation Board approves the statewide program in June.

The administering agency shall be responsible for the appropriate environmental review processes.

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## *How to Get a Road Paved*

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Statewide, nearly 2,100 miles of unpaved roads were paved between 1990 and 1998. In order for the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to widen or pave a road, first, the road must be in Virginia's secondary system of highways. These state-maintained roads are given a route number of 600 and above, and are usually identified by signs at intersections. Second, the road must carry traffic of 50 or more vehicles per day. VDOT takes traffic counts on unpaved roads periodically. The most recent count can be obtained from the VDOT Resident Engineer from that county. Third, the right of way to widen and pave the road must be made available. Property owners along an unpaved road normally donate property to provide 50 foot right of way to widen and straighten the road. However, there are cases when the Department must purchase the right of way necessary for the construction of this road. Right of way is "available" only when deeds from all property owners along the road are recorded in the clerk's office of the county circuit court. It should be noted that the lack of donated right of way from even one property owner often stops the entire project. And finally, the funding to widen and pave roads must be reserved in the county's Six-Year Plan. Roads included in the plan are decided upon jointly by the board of supervisors and the VDOT Resident Engineer.

The process of revising the Six-Year Plan includes an advertised public hearing to provide all citizens an opportunity to ask that their road be included in the plan. If all these requirements are met, a road will be

widened and paved when funding reserved in the plan becomes available for spending. When the road is added into the Six-Year Plan, it could be under construction within six or seven years.

If the donated right of way is not available, it may still be possible to pave a non-hard surfaced road through the **Pave-in Place Program**. Roads that meet certain criteria may be improved and paved with no additional right-of-way. However, additional easements for slopes and drainage may be needed to meet minimum geometric standards. The typical pave in place road consists of two nine-foot lanes with two-foot shoulders and three-foot ditches. A road must qualify from an engineering and safety standpoint. Typically, the traffic volume on a pave in place will be 250 vehicles or less. Roads that are good candidates require very little grading, little to moderate drainage improvements and should not have severe sight distance concerns that need to be corrected. The typical cost of a pave-in-place road is the same as a standard no-plan paving project involving donated right-of-way built to the same typical section. The time frame for construction is about the same as a standard no-plan project. The Pave-In Place-Program is a tool that can assist us in paving roads. Contact the local Resident Engineer to determine if a road qualifies for the pave-in-place concept.

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## *How to Request a Traffic Signal or Sign*

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Contact your local VDOT Residency office, which will send the request to the District Traffic Engineer for evaluation of location, traffic volume, accidents, and other factors. The findings will be used in determining whether to install a traffic control device (signal, sign, pavement marking). Nearly all transportation agencies in the United States follow uniform guidelines to determine when a traffic control device is appropriate. These guidelines are found in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) published by the Federal Highway Administration. In jurisdictions that maintain their own street systems, requests should go to the appropriate local officials.

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## *Maintenance Budget*

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Beginning in 1998, the Department adopted an asset management approach to administration and execution of maintenance efforts. Under it, maintenance budgets are developed and distributed in an attempt to optimize the overall condition of all roadway assets owned and operated by VDOT.

General asset groups are used to capture the wide range of physical assets VDOT must maintain. More detailed asset types categories are used to identify specific details of asset groups. The categories are the primary building blocks of the budget, and are the basis for evaluating resources used, work performed, and overall effectiveness of the program and managers. These groups are:

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<u>Example asset categories</u>		
I.	Drainage	Pipes, culverts, ditches, sidewalks, curb and gutter
II.	Roadside	Brush, trees, grass, and landscaping
III.	Traffic	Signals, signs, pavement markings, guardrail, and lighting
IV.	Pavement	Asphalt, concrete, non-hard surfaces, and shoulders
V.	Bridges	Decks, superstructure, substructure, and large pipe/ culverts
VI.	Special Facilities	Tunnels, rest areas, and ferries

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Using asset condition information and performance targets, the statewide maintenance program funding is allocated lump-sum or program level allocation to each district. Each district, through their District Maintenance Program leadership Group (DMPLG), further distributes maintenance allocations based

upon condition information, need, and performance targets. Subsequent maintenance activities are then divided into three different activity types:

- Preventative** Work directed towards preservation of an existing asset and related accessories as necessary to maintain a safe and efficient operation. Measures taken to arrest deterioration are considered preventative.
- Restorative** Work performed to return an asset as near to its original or reconstructed design condition, as practical, where the asset or any portion thereof is replaced, added, substantially renovated, removed, and/or installed. Work performed to provide a new service life to the asset is considered restorative.
- Operations** Work performed towards the functioning or sustaining the operation of the asset or service.

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## *Primary, Urban, and Interstate Allocation Process*

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Each year the Commonwealth Transportation Board updates the Six-Year Program that distributes funds available for construction on the interstate, primary, and urban highway systems, as well as funds available for ports, airports, and rail and public transportation.

To seek the maximum input from the public, pre-allocation hearings are held every Spring in each of the state's nine construction districts. Advice and input are solicited from members of the General Assembly, County Boards of Supervisors, City and Town Council Members, Planning Districts, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, other public officials, and the general public.

After the pre-allocation hearings, VDOT staff and the Commonwealth Transportation Board make tentative allocations for the projected funds available to each construction district. This funding is used to complete financing of ongoing projects and provide additional financing for future projects based on the most pressing needs.

Once the tentative allocations have been published, two allocation hearings are held, one for the eastern and one for the western portion of the state. After comments are received, the Commonwealth Transportation Board will adopt the Six-Year Program. The Six-Year Program also contains projects funded under Federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Transportation Enhancement Program, and Safety Improvement Programs, as well as the specially funded U. S. Route 58 Corridor Development Program.

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## *Public Versus Private Streets*

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Private streets are those where the use is permissive or privileged by right of ownership. The term is often confused with public streets that are privately maintained. Such streets are typically developed to a standard less than that which qualifies the road to be accepted by the Department for VDOT maintenance. VDOT refers to all streets not maintained by VDOT as private.

VDOT review of private street subdivision plans is limited to their impact on the existing public roadway network in terms of traffic generation, access, and drainage.

Private street connections to state maintained roadways must meet all VDOT criteria for subdivision street connections and commercial entrances, such as sight distance, pavement structure, auxiliary lanes, signalization, and permits.

Streets are eligible to be accepted into the state's system if they are built to VDOT standards dedicated to public use and otherwise comply with applicable requirements. They may be eligible as a rural addition if they are brought up to standards by others.



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## *Secondary Construction Budget*

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Although authority for the construction, maintenance, and control of the secondary road system is vested generally in the Department of Transportation, Virginia laws create partnership between the Department and the County Board Of Supervisors in improving local transportation.

Each year the Resident Engineer or a designee will attend a meeting of the Board of Supervisors for the purpose of preparing a budget for the expenditure of secondary road improvement funds for the next fiscal year. Often this is done as part of the annual Secondary Road Six Year Improvement Plan public hearing.

Highway funding is derived from state and federal gasoline taxes, vehicle title fees, vehicle sales tax and one-half percent of state's sales tax. Therefore the predictability of funding is dictated by the federal government.

Distribution of secondary construction funds is done by a 20% area and 80% population factor. The distribution formula results in, less-populated areas receiving less funding than urbanized areas.

Distribution of Unpaved Roads Funds is based on the ratio of unpaved secondary roads in the county serving fifty or more vehicles per day to the total number of such roads in the Commonwealth. The Unpaved Roads Funds were created by the General Assembly because of the recognized need for paving secondary unpaved roads. Reference, Section 33.1-23.1:1., of the Code of Virginia.

VDOT's construction is a pay-as-you-go program in that 70% of estimated costs for Preliminary Engineering, Right of Way and Construction must be allocated before that phase of a project can be initiated. 100% of the construction costs must be fully funded in the fiscal year that the work is completed.

When the Six-Year Plan is produced, the Department is dealing with approximations and projections in funding. At the time the Department and Board of Supervisors meet to discuss the Construction Budget for the upcoming fiscal year, the funding figures are more exact. The funding is generally applied to specific projects according to priorities set on the Six-Year Plan.

Occasionally, project costs exceed the funds programmed in previous budgets for that project. This creates deficits that must be addressed. Generally the first priority in the construction budget is to finance deficits.

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Allocations are then made for county wide or incidental improvements such as traffic and safety services, rural additions, pipe installation, surveying and preliminary engineering, fertilization and seeding, and design support. Allocations may be made for the unpaved roads, major reconstruction and bridge replacement projects based on priorities.

Normally construction projects in the first year of the Six-Year Plan are financed in the construction budget. After holding a public hearing on the proposed projects and considering citizen comments, the board, with the concurrence of the Resident Engineer, must adopt an official priority program for the next year.

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# *Sidewalks*

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The installation of a sidewalk is not a requirement of the Department's acceptance of a subdivision street. However, a sidewalk located within the dedicated right of way, whose construction is either voluntary or a requirement of the governing body, may be accepted for maintenance subject to its compliance with the following criteria and standards.

Sidewalks may be accepted on streets adjacent to and in the immediate vicinity of multiple businesses, public buildings, or public recreational facilities, or on subdivision streets within the specified range of the governing body's policy regarding pedestrian transportation between home and school.

Sidewalks on one or both sides of through streets within one mile (1.6 km) of all existing elementary schools, and one and one-half miles (2.4 km) of all existing intermediate and high schools, will be eligible for maintenance. This criteria shall also apply to sidewalks on streets in the vicinity of proposed schools, the construction of which is included in a county's five-year capital improvement budget.

Sidewalks on streets adjacent to and in the immediate vicinity of multiple commercial businesses or public facilities will be eligible for maintenance. Immediate vicinity shall mean up to 1,000 feet (300 m.) beyond the zoning line.

Sidewalks along any permanent cul-de-sac or loop street will be eligible for acceptance only if the street is the principle route for pedestrian access to a residential area having a land use density of four or more units per acre (0.4 hectare) and the provisions of either one of the above sentences are satisfied.

In situations not addressed, sidewalks may be approved for maintenance eligibility after individual study and joint concurrence by the Resident Engineer and the governing body.

The maintenance responsibility for the Department is limited to the replacement of sections due to safety concerns or loss of structural integrity. Snow removal is not the responsibility of VDOT.

# *Six-Year Secondary Road Improvement Plan*

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Funds for the Six-Year Secondary Road Construction Plan and the construction budget are derived from state and federal fuel taxes, vehicle title fees, vehicle sales tax and one-half cent of the State's general sales tax.

The predictability of funding amounts is greatly dictated by the financial climate of the times and changes of funding levels by the federal government. Therefore, in dealing with construction funds, especially in the Six-Year Construction Plan, the Department is dealing with approximations or projections. The Six-Year Improvement Plan is based on estimated funding.

Secondary Six-Year Plans are updated on an annual basis. The process gives citizens a chance to request improvements annually; facilitates Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) planning and planning requirements of TEA-21; allows the Board of Supervisors to evaluate their program annually and update it to address any changes in county priorities.

# *Snow Removal*

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The Department shall provide snow and ice control services at a level of service consistent with local jurisdictional needs including, but not limited to, emergency access, customer input, commuter and educational systems, economic movement of goods, average daily traffic, industrial access, and other traffic data.

VDOT's goals are to (1) make all priority highways passable by vehicles within 24 hours after the storm ends and all roads passable within 48 hours and (2) ensure the optimal movement of goods and traffic along Virginia's highways during snow and icy conditions.

Priority highways are defined as bare pavement routes that we strive to keep relatively free of snow and ice. Interstate, most primary, and a few very high-service secondary routes are classified as these priority routes. Bare pavement routes receive progressive and continuous effort to meet the bare pavement goal. After the conclusion of the storm and within no more than 24 hours, the pavement should be free of snow and ice.

Routes not designated bare pavement highways will receive attention as soon as practical and be plowed no later than 48 hours after the end of the storm. In most cases, this can be accomplished within 24 hours after the storm ends, on hard surfaced roads.

Each year the local residency will revise snow removal plans for the coming snow season based on local needs and available resources. Contractor supplied hired equipment is used to complement state forces.

VDOT does not remove snow from private or commercial roads or entrances. Upon written request VDOT will assist the cleaning of entrances for fire departments, emergency squads, and other emergency providers as operations allow.

VDOT provides snow removal service in most incorporated towns of less than 3500 population, and on primary roads in some towns with populations over 3500 depending on which section of the code they are operating by.

VDOT does not remove snow or ice on sidewalks.

Visit our agency web site at [www.vdot.state.va.us](http://www.vdot.state.va.us) and click "**Winter Weather Road Conditions**".

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VDOT does not remove snow off of the railroad grade crossings. The railroad has the responsibility to remove snow from the grade crossings. If the Railroad Company does not remove the snow then the Resident Engineer shall contact the Railroad Company official regarding removal.

VDOT shall apply chemical deicing abrasive to bridges at the beginning of a storm. Once a storm has ended, all chemical abrasives shall be removed from the bridge deck, wheel guard, etc.

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# *Subdivision Standards*

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The Commonwealth Transportation Board's minimum acceptable requirements that new subdivision streets must meet are explained in the publication "Subdivision Street Requirements." These requirements establish the basis for VDOT's acceptance of streets based on public use, the limits that the Department will accept regarding sidewalks, and establish maintenance cost participation parameters. These minimum standards will provide greater flexibility to the development within the Commonwealth.

Plans for the streets are submitted to VDOT's Resident Engineer through the county in which the subdivision is located. The Resident Engineer reviews the plans to determine if they comply with applicable standards and related requirements. If they do, the plans are approved. If the streets are built according to the plans and comply with other prerequisites, the County Board of Supervisors adopts a resolution requesting VDOT's acceptance of the streets. After we determine such action is appropriate, the street is officially accepted into the state's secondary system.

# *Towns With a Population Under 3,500*

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VDOT is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of streets in most incorporated towns of less than 3,500 population. However, there are a limited number of towns of less than 3,500 population that maintain their own streets. Towns that request VDOT to maintain their streets operate under §33.1-79 of the Code of Virginia and are limited to two miles of secondary system streets initially and are allowed to add up to 0.25 mile of additional streets annually to the secondary system. Streets established prior to January 1, 1962, must have a minimum 30 feet of right of way, and those established on or after January 1, 1962, must have 40 feet right of way. These streets must be accessible for travel under normal conditions.

Towns that do not request VDOT to maintain their roads under §33.1-79 operate under §33.1-82, are not subject to the same 0.25 mile limitation and may add streets if the following requirements are met:

Minimum 30 feet right of way with 12 feet of hard surface if established prior to July 1, 1950.

Minimum 50 feet right of way with 20 feet of hard surface if established on or after July 1, 1950.

Minimum subdivision street requirements if constructed as a local street after July 1, 1996.

Improvement of secondary system streets within towns of less than 3,500 population is considered along with all other roads in the secondary system of the county in which the town is located.



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# *Traffic Counts*

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Traffic counts are the basis for safety, economic, and engineering considerations in guiding administrators and engineers in the development of highway systems.

A traffic count serves only to provide the number of vehicles passing a given point in a given time period. The value of such a count is limited. Its potential value is increased when it is part of a series of comparable counts taken at strategic points in a network system. It becomes useful for many more purposes when the origin and destination of the vehicles comprising the count are known. Speed, spacing, direction and type of vehicles counted are essential to other facets of engineering studies. The principal uses of traffic counts programming future improvements are (1) accident analyses, (2) engineering studies, (3) a guide in planning and programming future improvements and land development, (4) determining road classification, and (5) to answer many inquiries from individuals and representatives of businesses.

The Department conducts traffic counts using a three-year count cycle. All roads that are functionally classified higher than local will be counted once during that three-year period. The count schedule is set-up by county, so that all roads within a county are counted during the same year of the three-year cycle. All unpaved roads, regardless of functional classification, will also be counted once during the three-year period. Already paved roads that are functionally classified as local will be counted once every six years (if there is growth potential for the area) or once every twelve years (if they serve fully occupied housing subdivisions).